IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) A method for obtaining consumer preferences for a product/service category over a communications network from a plurality of consumers, comprising the steps of:

selecting one or more product/service criteria for said product/service category by a consumer and selecting at least one of said ~~selected~~ product/service criteria selected by said consumer as a ranking parameter by a said consumer;

searching a database having product and service information, and connected to said network for products or services in said product/service category based on said ~~selected~~ product/service criteria selected by said consumer;

displaying a list of products or services satisfying said ~~selected~~ product/service criteria selected by said consumer on a processing device associated with said consumer, said list being ordered in accordance with said ranking parameter selected by said consumer; and

storing said ~~selected~~ product/service criteria selected by said consumer and said ranking parameter selected by said consumer in said database without collecting or maintaining information identifying or specific to said consumer, thereby providing market research data of consumer preferences ~~from said consumer interested in~~ for said product/service category based on selections made by said plurality of consumers without collecting information identifying or specific to said consumer.

2. (Previously Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the step of searching searches said database for products or services that matches closest to said selected product/service criteria.

3. (Previously Amended) The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of entering one or more new product/service criteria by said consumer if it is determined

that no product or service in said database satisfies said selected product/service criteria; and wherein the step of searching searches said product database for products or services in said product/service category based on said new product/service criteria.

4. (Previously Amended) The method of claim 1, further comprising the steps of:

selecting one or more products or services from said list by said consumer;

retrieving product/service information for said selected products or services from said database;

displaying product/service information of said selected products or services on said processing device; and

storing said selected products or services in said database as market research data of consumer preferences.

5. (Previously Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the step of selecting one or more product/service criteria includes the steps of:

displaying a list of product/service criteria for selection by said consumer; and

selecting a range for each product/service criteria selected by said consumer.

6. (Original) The method of claim 4, wherein the step of displaying product/service information includes the steps of:

displaying said selected products or services on said processing device; and

controlling the display of said selected products or services by said consumer to enable said consumer to virtually investigate or examine said selected product or services.

7. (Original) The method of claim 4, wherein the step of displaying product/service information includes the steps of:

receiving information about the physical characteristics of said consumer;

generating an image of said consumer in accordance with the received physical characteristics of said consumer;

displaying said selected products or services along with said image of said consumer to provide virtual display of said selected products or services; and

controlling said virtual display by said consumer to enable said consumer to virtually investigate or examine said selected products or services.

8. (Previously Amended) The method of claim 1, further comprising the steps of:

selecting additional product/service criteria by said consumer;

searching said database for products or services in said product/service category based on said selected product/service criteria and said additional product/service criteria;

displaying a list of products or services related to said selected product/service criteria and said additional product/service criteria on said processing device, said list being ordered in accordance with said ranking parameter; and

storing said additional criteria in said databases as market research data of consumer preferences.

9. (Previously Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein said database includes advertisements and further comprising the step of:

selecting an advertisement from said database in accordance with said selected product/service criteria; and

displaying said advertisement along with said list on said processing device.

10. (Previously Amended) The method of claim 9, wherein said database comprises a product database having product/service information, a marketing database having consumer preferences, and an advertisement database having advertisements; and wherein the step of searching searches said product database for products or services in said product/service category based on said selected product/service criteria; wherein the step of storing stores said selected product/service criteria and said ranking parameter in said marketing database as market research data of consumer preferences; and wherein the step of selecting the advertisement selects advertisement from said advertisement database in accordance with said selected product/service criteria.

11.   (Previously Amended)   The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of generating a report indicating a consumer trend from said market research data of consumer preferences in said database for a product/service category selected by an operator.

12.   (Cancelled)

13.   (Currently Amended) A method for targeting advertisement over a communications network, comprising the steps of:

selecting one or more product/service criteria for a product/service category by a consumer and selecting at least one of said ~~selected~~ product/service criteria selected by said consumer as a ranking parameter by ~~a~~ said consumer;

searching a product database having product and service information, and connected to said network for products or services in said product/service category based on said ~~selected~~ product/service criteria selected by said consumer and an advertisement database connected to said network for one or more advertisement based on said ~~selected~~ product/service criteria selected by said consumer ;

displaying said advertisement and a list of products or services satisfying said ~~selected~~ product/service criteria selected by said consumer on a processing device associated with said consumer, said list being ordered in accordance with said ranking parameter selected by said consumer ; and

storing said ~~selected~~ product/service criteria selected by said consumer and said ranking parameter selected by said consumer without collecting or maintaining information identifying or specific to said consumer, thereby providing market research data of consumer preferences ~~from said consumer interested in~~ for said product/service category based on selections made by said plurality consumers without collecting information identifying or specific to said consumer.

14-21. (Canceled)

22. (Currently Amended) A computer readable medium comprising code for obtaining consumer preferences for a product/service category over a communications network from a plurality of consumers, said code comprising instructions for:

selecting one or more product/service criteria for said product/service category <u>by a consumer</u> and <u>selecting</u> at least one of said <s>selected</s> product/service criteria <u>selected by said consumer</u> as a ranking parameter by <s>a</s> <u>said</u> consumer;

searching a database <u>having product and service information, and</u> connected to said network for products or services in said product/service category based on said <s>selected</s> product/service criteria <u>selected by said consumer;</u>

displaying a list of products or services satisfying said <s>selected</s> product/service criteria <u>selected by said consumer</u> on a processing device associated with said consumer, said list being ordered in accordance with said ranking parameter <u>selected by said consumer</u>; and

storing said <s>selected</s> product/service criteria <u>selected by said consumer</u> and said ranking parameter <u>selected by said consumer</u> in said database <u>without collecting or maintaining information identifying or specific to said consumer</u>, thereby providing market research data of consumer preferences <s>from said consumer interested in</s> <u>for</u> said product/service category <u>based on selections made by said plurality of consumers without collecting information identifying or specific to said consumer</u>.

23. (Previously Added) The computer readable medium of claim 22, wherein said code further comprises instructions for searching said database for products or services that matches closest to said selected product/service criteria.

24. (Previously Added) The computer readable medium of claim 22, wherein said code further comprises instructions for:

entering one or more new product/service criteria by said consumer if it is determined that no product or service in said database satisfies said selected product/service criteria; and

searching said product database for products or services in said product/service category based on said new product/service criteria.

25.   (Previously Added)   The computer readable medium of claim 22, wherein said code further comprises instructions for:

selecting one or more products or services from said list by said consumer; retrieving product/service information for said selected products or services from said database;

displaying product/service information of said selected products or services on said processing device; and

storing said selected products or services in said database as market research data of consumer preferences.

26.   (Previously Added)   The computer readable medium of claim 22, wherein said code further comprises instructions for:

displaying a list of product/service criteria for selection by said consumer; and

selecting a range for each product/service criteria selected by said consumer.

27.   (Previously Added)   The computer readable medium of claim 25, wherein said code further comprises instructions for:

displaying said selected products or services on said processing device; and

controlling the display of said selected products or services by said consumer to enable said consumer to virtually investigate or examine said selected products or services.

28.   (Previously Added)   The computer readable medium of claim 25, wherein said code further comprises instructions for:

receiving information about the physical characteristics of said consumer;

generating an image of said consumer in accordance with the received physical characteristics of said consumer;

displaying said selected products or services along with said image of said consumer to provide virtual display of said selected products or services; and

controlling said virtual display by said consumer to enable said consumer to virtually investigate or examine said selected products or services.

29.   (Previously Added)   The computer readable medium of claim 22, wherein said code further comprises instructions for:

selecting additional product/service criteria by said consumer;

searching said database for products or services in said product/service category based on said selected product/service criteria and said additional product/service criteria;

displaying a list of products or services related to said selected product/service criteria and said additional product/service criteria on said processing device, said list being ordered in accordance with said ranking parameter; and

storing said additional criteria in said databases as market research data of consumer preferences.

30.   (Previously Added)   The computer readable medium of claim 22, wherein said database includes advertisements and wherein said code further comprises instructions for:

selecting an advertisement from said database in accordance with said selected product/service criteria; and

displaying said advertisement along with said list on said processing device.--

31.   (Currently Amended) The computer readable medium of claim 22, wherein said code further comprises instruction for generating a report indicating a consumer trend from said market research data of consumer preferences in said database for a product/service category selected by an operator; and wherein said ranking parameter is determined based on said consumer trend.

32.   (Currently Amended) A computer readable medium comprising code for targeting advertisement over a communications network, said code comprising instructions for:

selecting one or more product/service criteria for a product/service category <u>by a</u> <u>consumer</u> and <u>selecting</u> at least one of said ~~selected~~ product/service criteria <u>selected by</u> <u>said consumer</u> as a ranking parameter by ~~a~~ <u>said</u> consumer;

searching a product database <u>having product and service information, and</u> connected to said network for products or services in said product/service category based on said ~~selected~~ product/service criteria <u>selected by said consumer</u> and an advertisement database connected to said network for one or more advertisement based on said ~~selected~~ product/service criteria <u>selected by said consumer</u> ;

displaying said advertisement and a list of products or services satisfying said ~~selected~~ product/service criteria <u>selected by said consumer</u> on a processing device associated with said consumer, said list being ordered in accordance with said ranking parameter <u>selected by said consumer</u> ; and

storing said ~~selected~~ product/service criteria <u>selected by said consumer</u> and said ranking parameter <u>selected by said consumer without collecting or maintaining</u> <u>information identifying or specific to said consumer</u>, thereby providing market research data of consumer preferences ~~from said consumer interested in~~ <u>for</u> said product/service category <u>based on selections made by said plurality consumers without collecting</u> <u>information identifying or specific to said consumer</u>.